

Natural Resources Commission Meeting

NRC Policy Committee on
Wildlife & Fisheries

May 9, 2013



NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries

- Fisheries Chief Update
- WLD Chief Update
- Furbearer Regulations
- Deer Regulations, DMU Boundaries, Open/Closed, APR
- Cormorant Report
- Moose Update



Proposed Orders

- NRC – For Information
 - Furbearer Regulations (WCO Amendment No. 7 of 2013)
 - DMU Boundaries; Open/Closed DMUs; Antlerless Limits (WCO Amendment No. 8 of 2013)
 - Northwest Lower Peninsula Antler Point Restriction (WCO Amendment No. 9 of 2013)
- NRC – For Action
 - Deer Management Assistance Permit Regulations (WCO Amendment No. 3 of 2013)
 - Hunting Access Program Regulations (WCO Amendment No. 4 of 2013)
 - Fall Turkey Regulations and License Quotas (WCO Amendment No. 5 of 2013)
 - Wolf Regulations (WCO Amendment No. 6 of 2013)





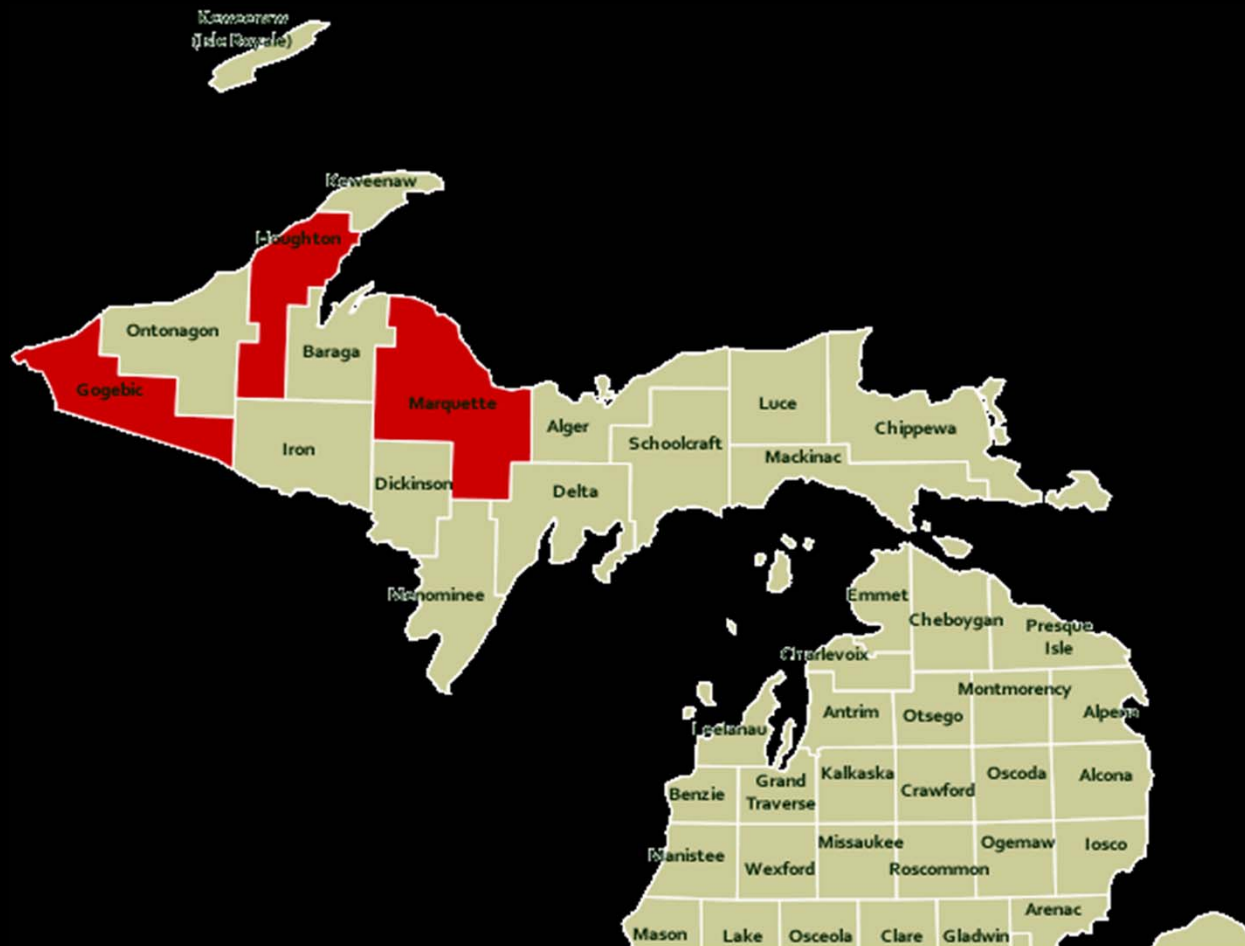
Fisheries Division Update

Department of Natural Resources

Jim Dexter, Chief
Fisheries Division
May 9, 2013



Family Friendly Fishing Waters





Spring Fish Stocking



- More than 11 million fish
 - Salmon & Trout
 - Coolwater species
- 700 locations
- 140,000 miles



Spring Egg Takes



➤ Walleye

- Muskegon River & Little Bay de Noc
- 65 million eggs

➤ Steelhead

- Little Manistee River
- 4.2 million eggs

Other Coolwater Egg Takes



- Great Lakes Muskellunge – Likely June
- Lake Sturgeon – May – early June



Facility Power Issues and Fish Losses



- Harrietta State Fish Hatchery – April 16
- Power surge damaged control boards
 - 1,100 brown trout lost
- Little Manistee Weir – Steelhead – April 13
- Power surge shut down pumps
- Power relays at fault
 - Relays replaced with new alarm system
 - 211 steelhead donated to local food bank



Questions?

**Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division**



Wildlife Division Update



**Russ Mason, Chief
Wildlife Division
May 9, 2013**



APR Standardization

- Statewide: One antler at least 3" long
 - More stringent restrictions in certain areas of the Upper Peninsula, Southern Lower Peninsula, and Northern Lower Peninsula
 - Department is drafting a standardization proposal
 - Presentation at June meeting



Antlerless License Limits

- Newly proposed multi-county DMUs in Southern Lower Peninsula
 - Significant EHD outbreaks
 - Lower end of deer densities
 - Expecting fewer antlerless licenses in some new DMUs
 - Licenses may sell out
 - Quota reductions will not affect appropriate issuance of DMAPs



Thank You

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Furbearer Regulations



Courtesy of Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians

Adam Bump, Bear and Furbearer Specialist
Wildlife Division
May 9, 2013



Topics For 2013 Review

- Bobcat Area Expansion in NLP
- Incidental Seals - WCO Requirements
- Registration Deadlines
- Pursuing Coyote At Night With Dogs
- Use of Light For Nuisance Raccoons All Year
- Muskrat Structure Trapping
- Use of No. 3 and 4 Buckshot at Night
- Hunting Bobcat at Night - All Methods



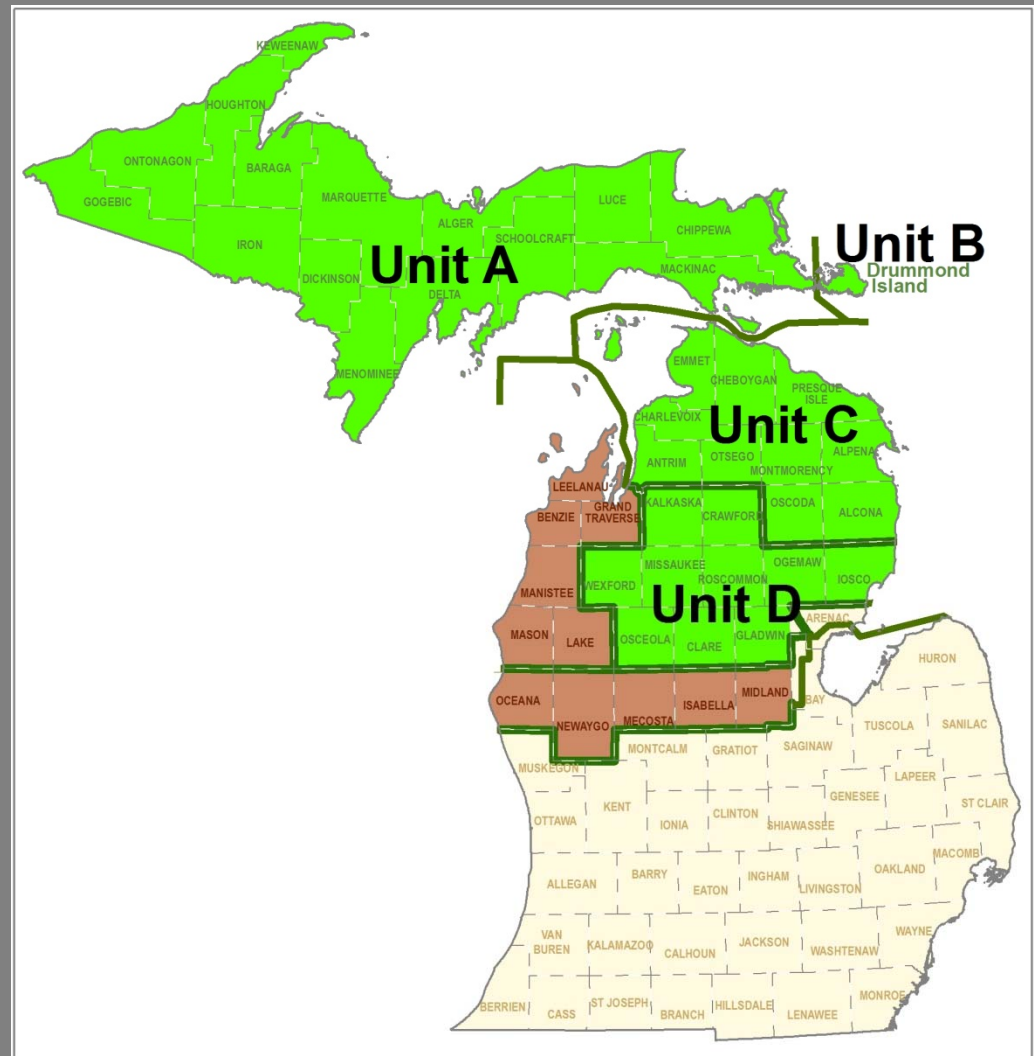
NLP Bobcat Season Expansion

- Interest in expanding area open to take of bobcats in the NLP
 - Trapping organizations
- Evaluation of populations in the area to help inform recommendation
- Use information to inform decisions on possible expansion
 - 2 year bobcat scent post station survey
 - Evaluate occupancy (relative abundance) and compare with harvested areas



Study/Proposed Area

- Hunting currently open in Units C&D
- Scent Post Station Survey conducted in a portion of Unit D as a comparison
- Potential expansion area surveyed in 2011-2012



Survey Objectives

- Assess changes in bobcat occupancy (abundance) from 2003-2006 to 2011-2012 in the Unit D and Manistee study areas
- Assess differences in occupancy (abundance) between harvested and non-harvested study areas in 2003-2006 and 2011-2012



Methods

- Trained staff in identification of bobcat tracks
- Established transects spaced at least 5 mi apart located in bobcat habitat
- Transects made up of 10 scent stations (circles of sand baited with fatty acid scent tablet)



Results

Area	2003-2006	2011-2012
Harvest (Unit D)	0.71 (0.53-0.84)	0.95 (0.84-0.99)
Non-Harvest areas combined	0.22 (0.10-0.41)	0.69 (0.53-0.82)



Current NLP Season Structure

- Present season structure-Units C & D:
 - Hunting permitted on public and private lands:
 - Unit C: 60 days
 - Unit D: 32 days
 - Trapping season permitted on private land only, with foothold traps only
 - Units C & D: 11 days
 - 1 bobcat season limit



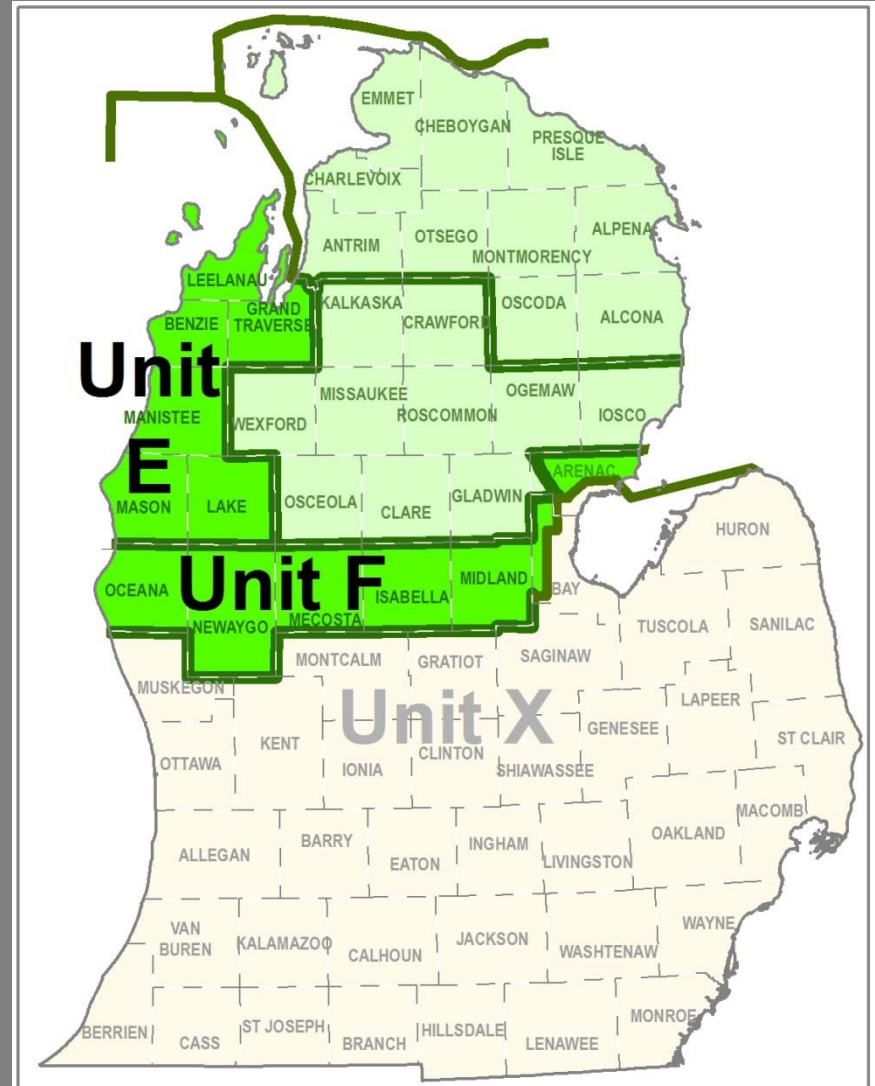
NLP Bobcat Zone Expansion

- Most stakeholder concerns were in 2 categories
 - Make sure harvest is sustainable, doesn't negatively impact bobcat populations
 - Maximize recreational opportunities/equitably
- SPS survey shows that expansion areas can support some harvest



NLP Bobcat Zone Expansion Recommendation

- Open 2 New Units
 - Unit E
 - Leelanau, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Manistee, Mason, Lake
 - Unit F
 - Oceana, Newaygo, Mecosta, Isabella, Midland, portions of Bay & Arenac (Zone 2)



NLP Bobcat Zone Expansion Recommendation

- Structure
 - One bobcat limit for all LP units combined
 - 11-day hunting season
 - January 1-11 (Same opener, shorter season than C&D hunting)
 - Public and private lands
 - Call or dogs, no nighttime hunting
 - 11-day trapping season
 - December 10-20 (Same as Unit C&D trapping)
 - Public and private lands
 - Foothold traps only



Incidental Seals – WCO Requirement

- Currently no WCO language regarding incidental seals
- Recommend adding language in WCO to enforce the use of incidental seals
 - All furbearers with a bag limit or protected species
 - Addresses enforcement concerns



Registration Deadlines

- Current otter registration deadline
 - 3 business days following April 30
- Recommend changing otter deadline to match bobcat registration deadline
 - 10 days following the close of the season/unit in which the animal was taken
- Recommend no change to fisher, marten, or bobcat registration deadline



Pursuit of Coyotes at Night with Dogs

- WCO allows pursuit of fox at night with dogs (and take of raccoon, opossum)
- Stakeholder concerns about increased illegal activity
 - Similar activity is currently legal
- Recommend change to allow pursuit of coyotes at night with dogs



Use of Light For Nuisance Raccoons All Year

- Recommend allowing use of a light for take of nuisance raccoons all year for all legal methods



Muskrat Structure Trapping

- Request to allow traps inside push ups/feeders
- Recommend not making changes in 2013
 - Current regulation and interpretation clear and easy to follow/enforce
 - Does not reduce ability to harvest muskrats or reduce recreational opportunity
 - Trappers seem evenly divided
 - Recently trappers have expressed concern about muskrat harvest levels



No. 3 and 4 Buckshot

- Reviewed in 2011
 - Enforcement concerns remain
 - Protect deer and big game at night
- Further discussed with predator hunting community in 2012
- No changes recommended



Hunting Bobcat At Night

– All Methods

- Would add use of call and light to take bobcats
 - Likely to increase harvest
 - Current objective to reduce harvest in the UP
 - Proposing expansion of open area in the LP
 - No change recommended at this time



2014 and 2016 Stakeholder List

- Beaver/otter; possibility the Department may recommend changes after a broader review of riparian issues
- Mink snaring
- Riparian rights; ability to anchor a floating set on private bottomlands
- 48-hour check; possible for LP
- Equity of existing northern LP bobcat season (trapping length and public land)
- Open fisher season on Drummond Island



2014 and 2016 Stakeholder List

- Increase otter bag limit in UP (EUP)
- Bobcat in Northern LP- same season as hunting (length and access)
- Use incidental pelts for educational purpose and put up fur to raise money for educational purposes (probably non regulatory)
- Flybait (the issue is illegal use to poison raccoons)
- Limited entry system for limited take species
- Consider allowing incidental bobcat taken in Oct-Nov to be retained by trappers
- Remove restrictions on fur buyers harvesting beavers
- Cable restraints



2014 and 2016 Stakeholder List

- Increase otter limit in LP
- Increase opportunities for cage traps
- Increase raccoon season to any open water season
- Would like to set 110s or dog proof traps on a beaver dam or lodge
- Lower bobcat limit to 1 statewide
- Would like to have state land available for dog events
- Have a Dec 1 deadline for acquiring kill tags
- Include trapping if there is a harvest on wolves



Thank You

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Deer Regulations



Brent Rudolph, Deer and Elk Program Leader
Wildlife Division
May 9, 2013



Deer Regulations for Information

- Deer Management Unit (DMU) Boundary Changes
- Antlerless Licenses Open/Closed Status
- Antlerless License Purchase Limits
- Proposed Antler Point Restrictions (APR)



Regional Significance

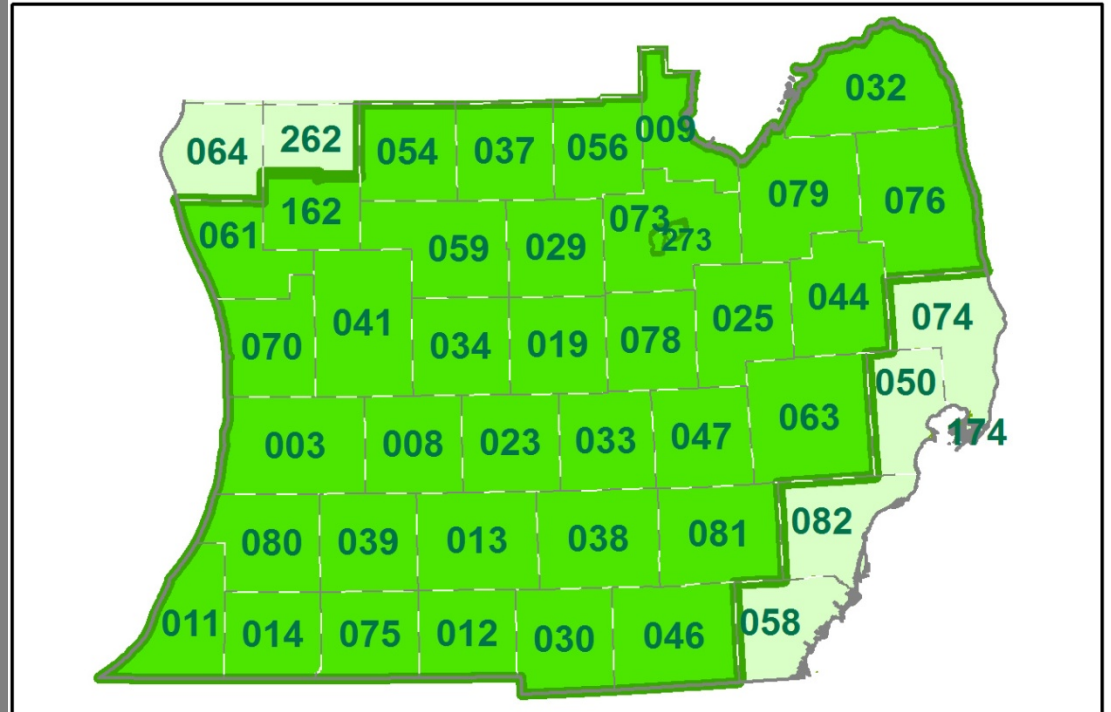
- Initial field recommendations were provisional
 - Changes since draft are being presented
- Recommended replacement of DMU 486
 - Southwest, Southeast, and Northern Lower Peninsula Management Regions
- Open/Closed antlerless license status
 - Upper and Northern Lower Peninsula



DMU 486

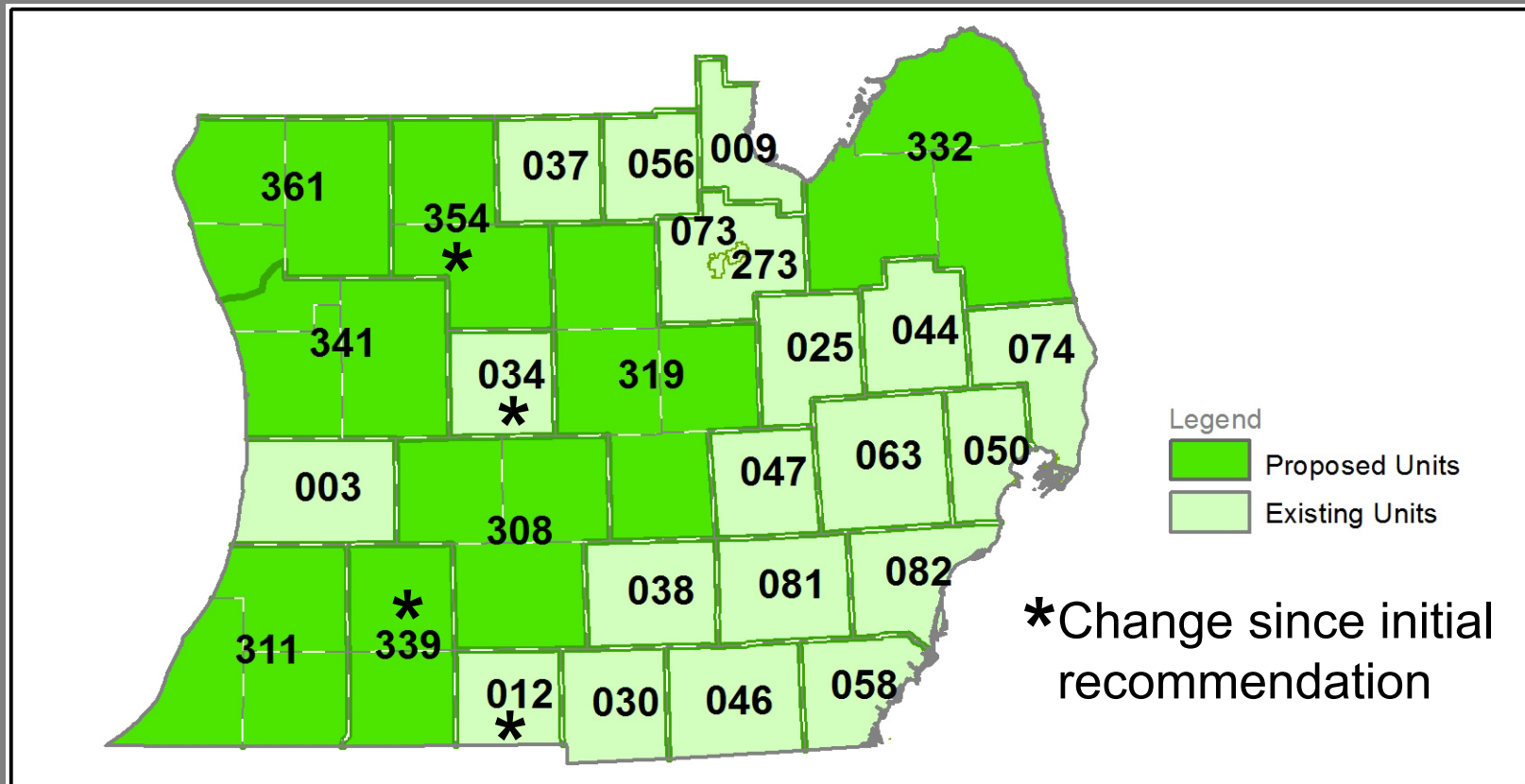
Multi-county unit created in 2009 to emphasize reduction of deer populations and impacts.

- Deer population estimates/indices have stabilized or declined
- Repeat EHD outbreaks (widespread in 2013)
- *Time to direct management efforts to distinct areas on smaller scale*



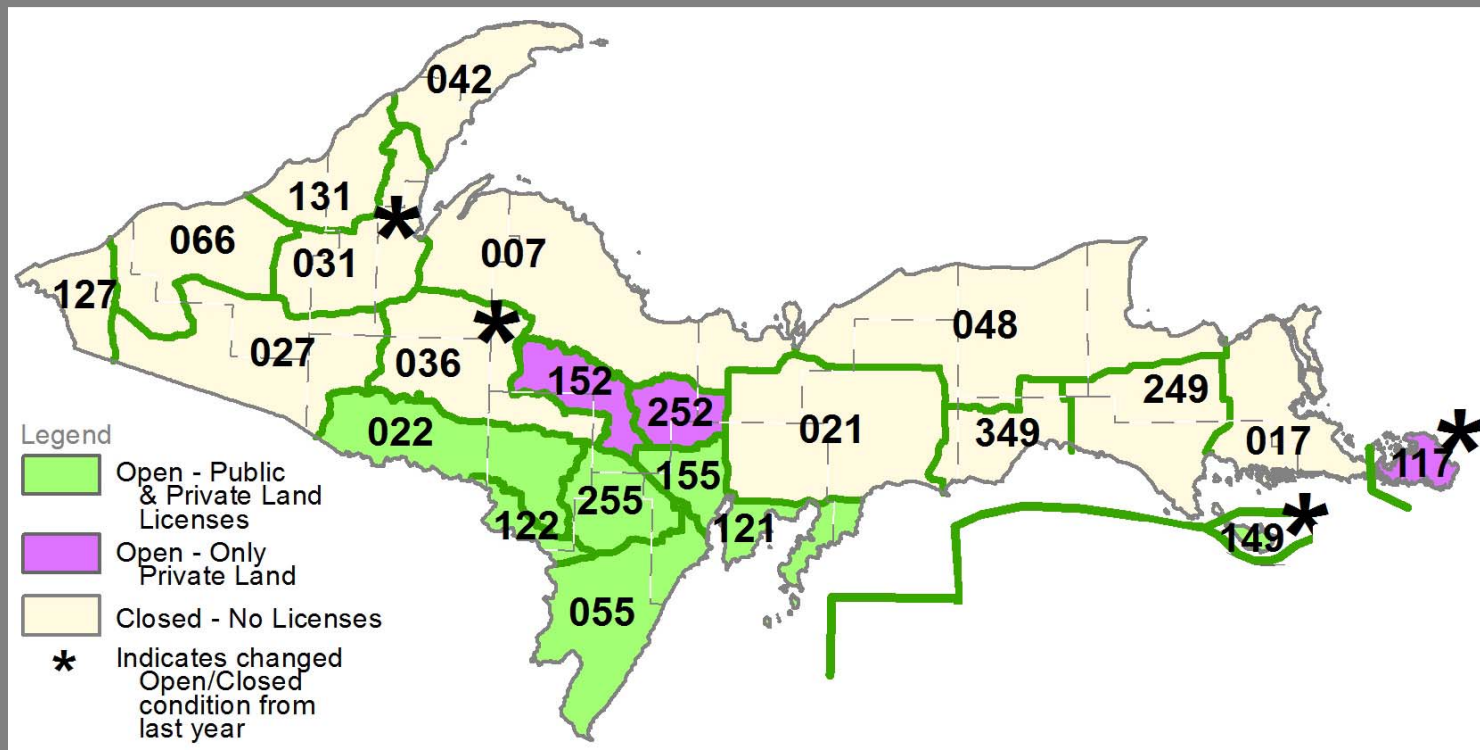
Recommended New DMUs

- 308 (Bellevue)
- 311 (Keeler)
- 319 (Laingsburg)
- 332 (Greenleaf)
- 339* (Vicksburg)
- 341 (Sparta)
- 354* (Lakeview)
- 361 (Fremont)



Recommended Antlerless License Status Compared to 2012

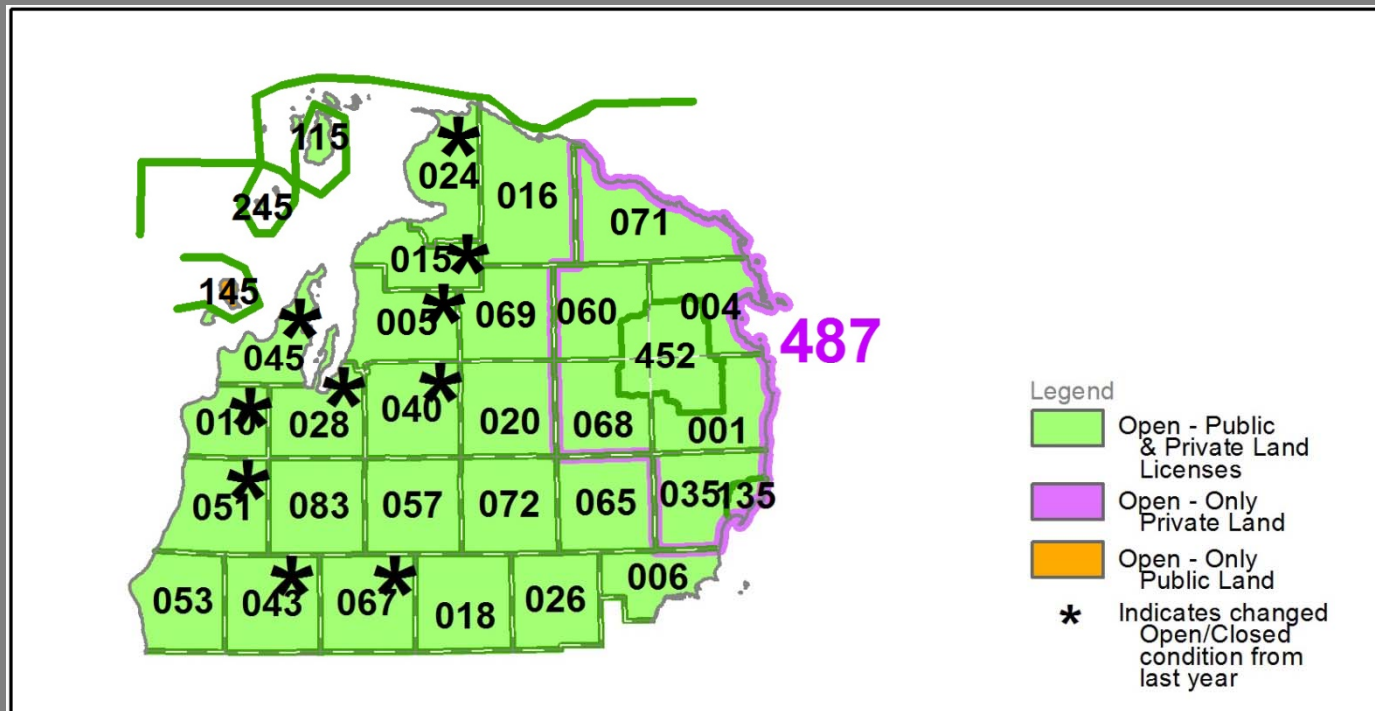
- Close on Public Land
 - 117 (Drummond Island)
- Open on Private and Public Land
 - 149 (Round/Bois Blanc Island)
- Close on Private Land (Change since initial)
 - 031 (Nissula)
 - 036 (Amasa/Michigamme)



Recommended Antlerless License Status Compared to 2012

Open on Public Land

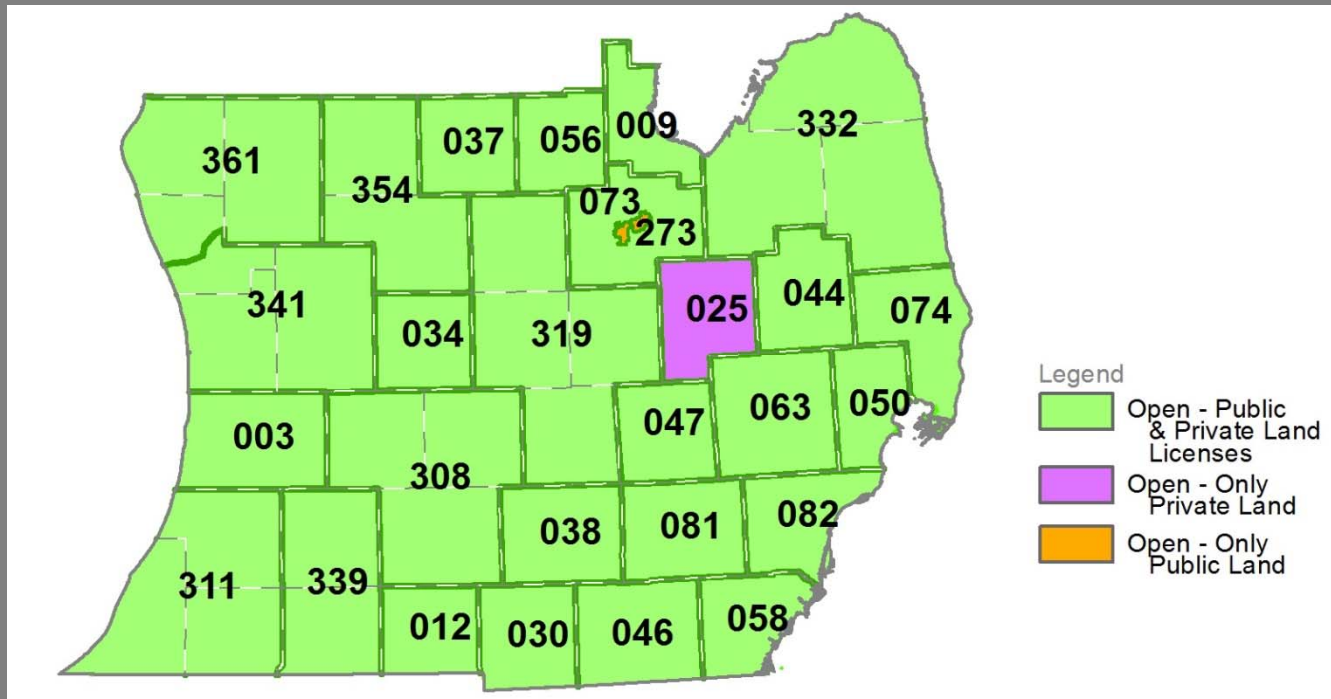
- 005 (Antrim)
- 010 (Benzie)
- 015 (Charlevoix)
- 024 (Emmet)
- 028 (Grand Traverse)
- 040 (Kalkaska)
- 043 (Lake)
- 045 (Leelanau)
- 051 (Manistee)
- 067 (Osceola)



Recommended Antlerless License Status

New DMUs Open to Public and Private Land

- 308 (Bellevue)
- 311 (Keeler)
- 319 (Laingsburg)
- 332 (Greenleaf)
- 339 (Vicksburg)
- 354 (Lakeview)
- 361 (Fremont)



Antlerless License Purchase Limits

- November 2012: Interim Order EHD response
 - DMU 486: purchase limit of 5 private land licenses
 - Purchase limit of 2 public land licenses
 - Expired May 8, 2013
- Recommend no action
 - Replacements for DMU 486 will include appropriate private and public land quotas



Northwest Lower Peninsula Antler Point Restriction (APR)

- Proposed by Northwest Michigan Branch, Quality Deer Management Association
 - 12 Counties in the Northwest Lower Peninsula
- APR must protect $\geq 50\%$ yearling bucks
 - Minimum: one antler with ≥ 3 points
 - Statewide: if 2 bucks taken, must have one antler with ≥ 4 points

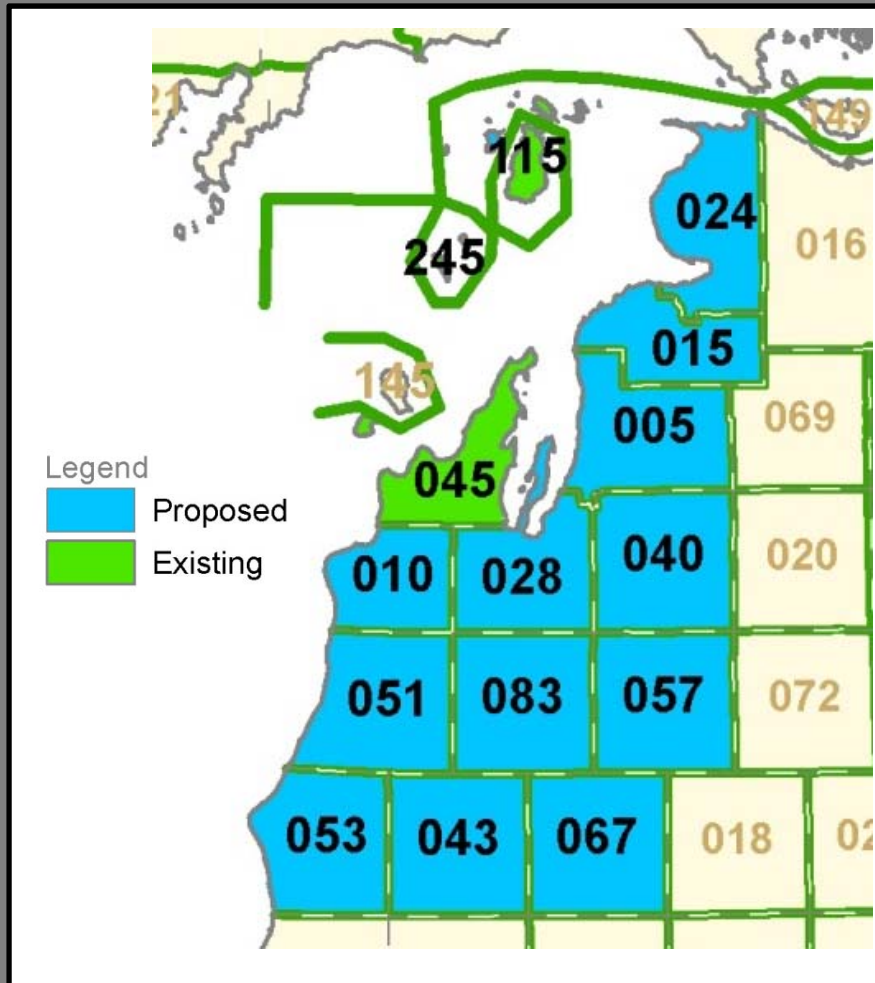


APR Survey Results

- Required response rate $\geq 50\%$
 - Adjusted sample size = 2,082
 - 79.8% response rate
- Required support $\geq 66\%$ “yes”
 - 68.5% ($\pm 2.3\%$)
- Additional input (intended for landowners) via email
 - 148 support
 - 109 oppose
 - 35 “other”



Implementation Recommended



Antrim,
Benzie,
Charlevoix,
Emmet,
Grand Traverse,
Kalkaska,
Lake,
Manistee,
Mason,
Missaukee,
Osceola,
Wexford



Thank You



www.michigan.gov/deer



Double-crested Cormorant Management Status in Michigan



Karen T. Cleveland, All-Bird Biologist
Wildlife Division
May 9, 2013



Michigan Interagency Cormorant Coordination Group

- Agencies authorized to manage cormorants
 - Department of Natural Resources
 - U.S. Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 - State Tribal representatives
 - Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority
 - Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians
 - Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians
 - Bay Mills Indian Community



Population Trends

- MI populations stabilized around 30,000 nests 1997-2007
- MI populations have been declining since 2007
 - 34.5% decline from 2007 - 2011
- 2011 statewide count of 19,205 nests
- Goal range of 5,000-12,500 nests

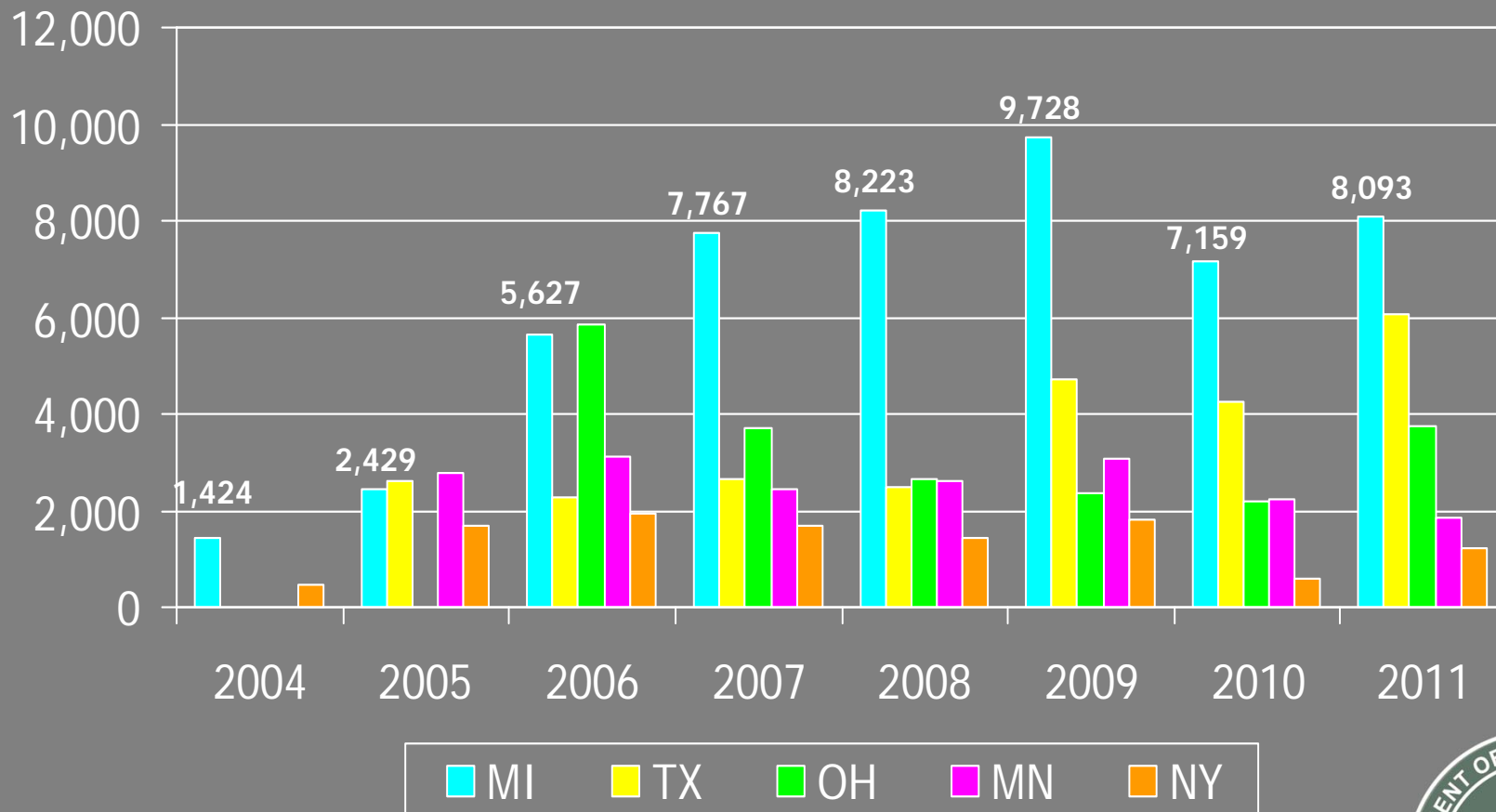


2012 Management Actions

- Colony reduction
 - 11,023 birds killed
 - 2,949 nests oiled or destroyed
- Harassment
 - 1,938 birds killed



Top PRDO Cormorant Control States



2013 Anticipated Activities

- Interagency group finalized 2013 recommended activities
 - Recommendations include
 - Continuation of 2012 projects
 - Maintenance of reduced breeding colony size in Les Cheneaux Islands and Ludington Pumped Storage Facility
 - Further reduction of breeding colony size at Thunder Bay, Beaver Island Archipelago, and Bays de Noc
 - Protection of black-crowned night-herons at Pte. Mouillee SGA
 - Diet study in Saginaw Bay

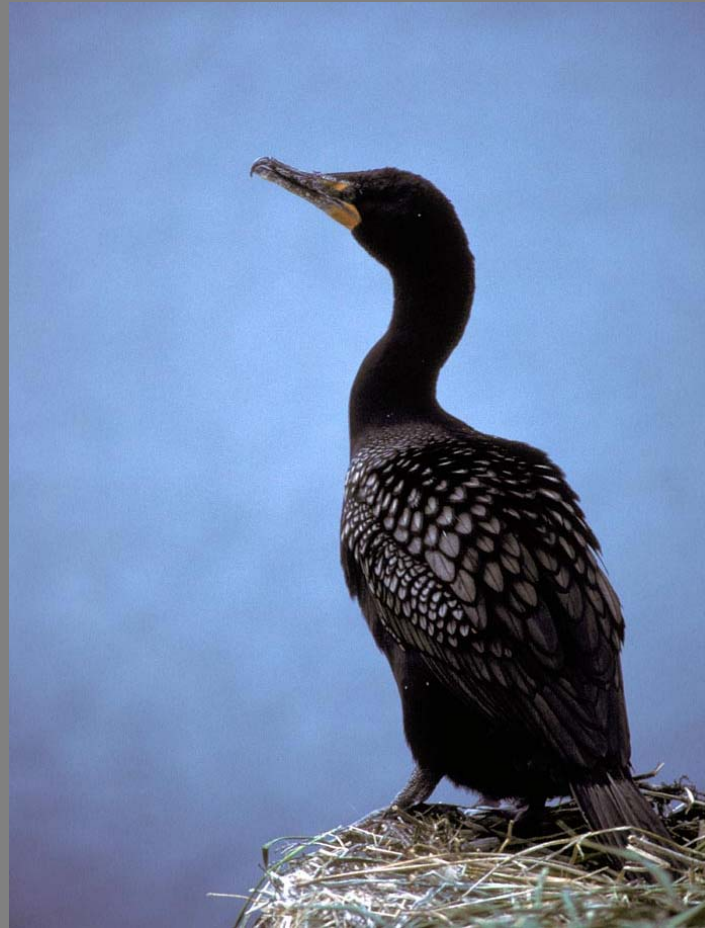


National EIS Review

- Final Environmental Impact Statement drafted in 2003
- EIS currently under review
 - deadline: 2014
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service requested input
 - DNR recommended regional management approach
- Deadline will likely be extended and current regulations stay in place until review is complete



Thank You



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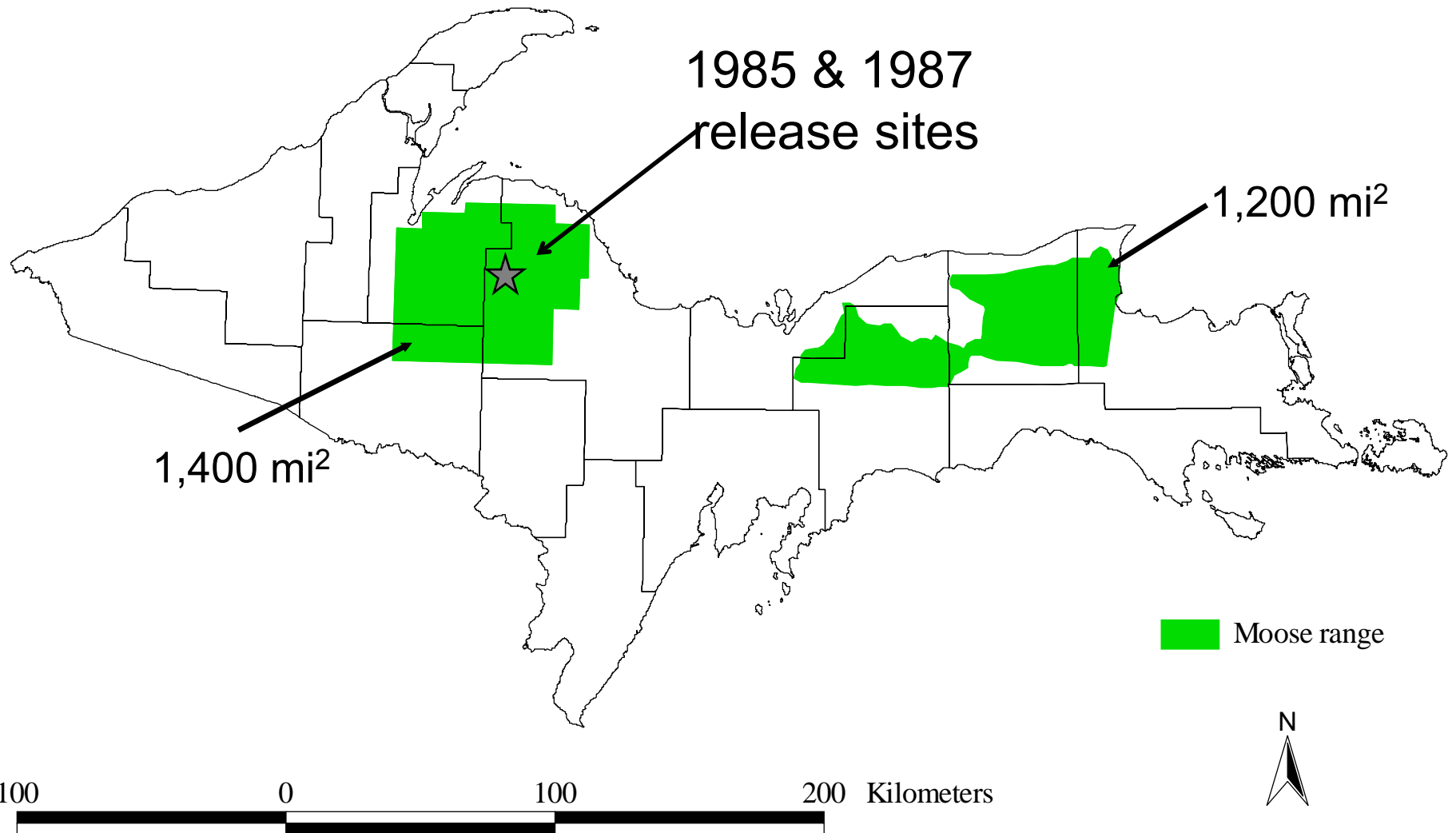
Moose Population Survey



Dean Beyer, Wildlife Research Specialist
Wildlife Division
May, 2013



Moose Distribution (Outside of Isle Royale)



Aerial Survey



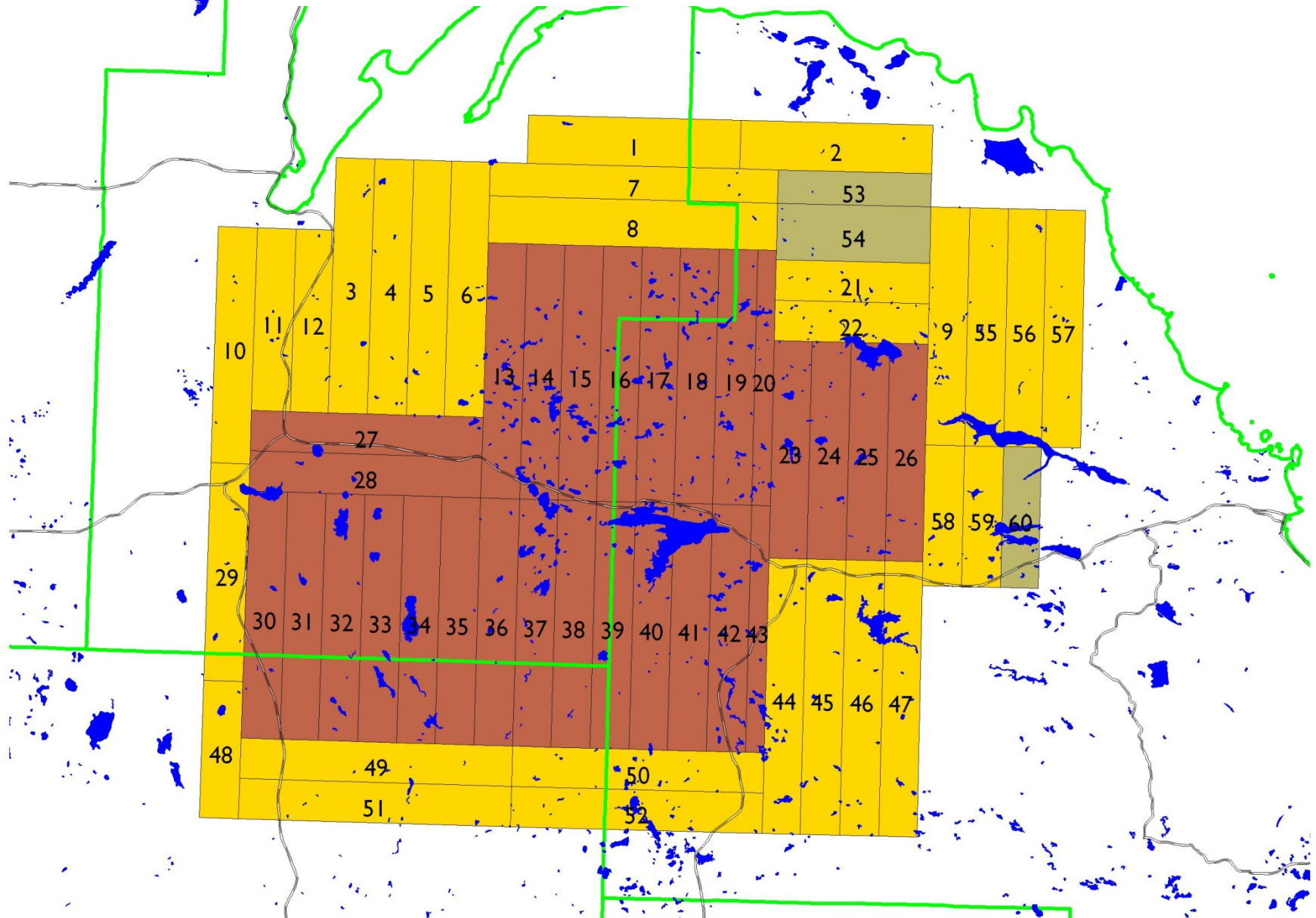


Sightability Correction Model

- Experimental trials on radio-collared moose



Moose Population Survey



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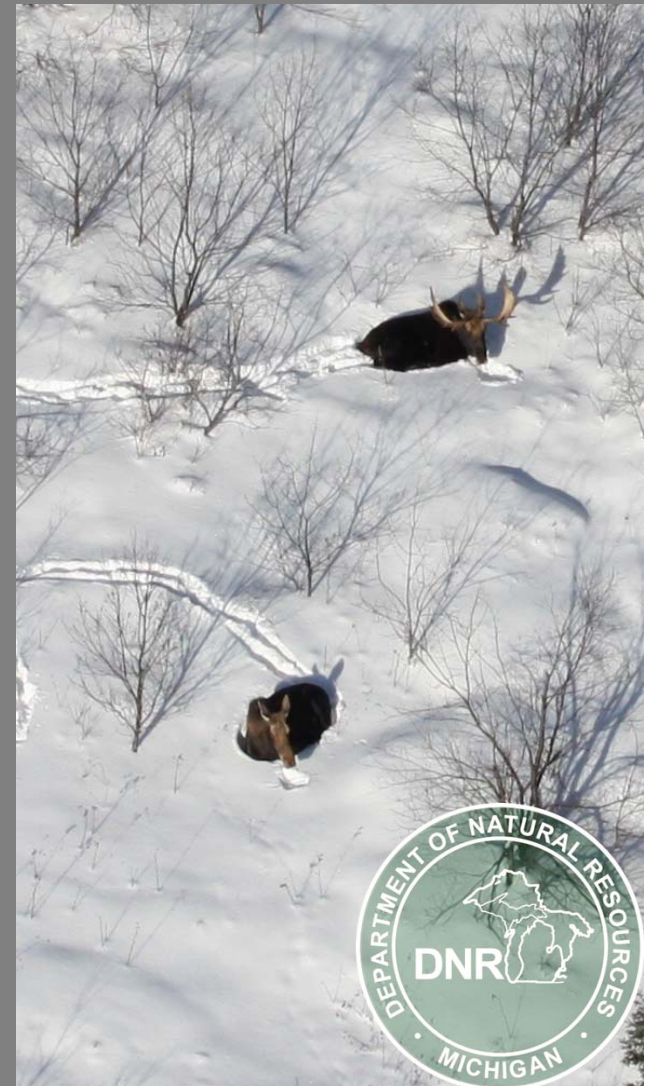
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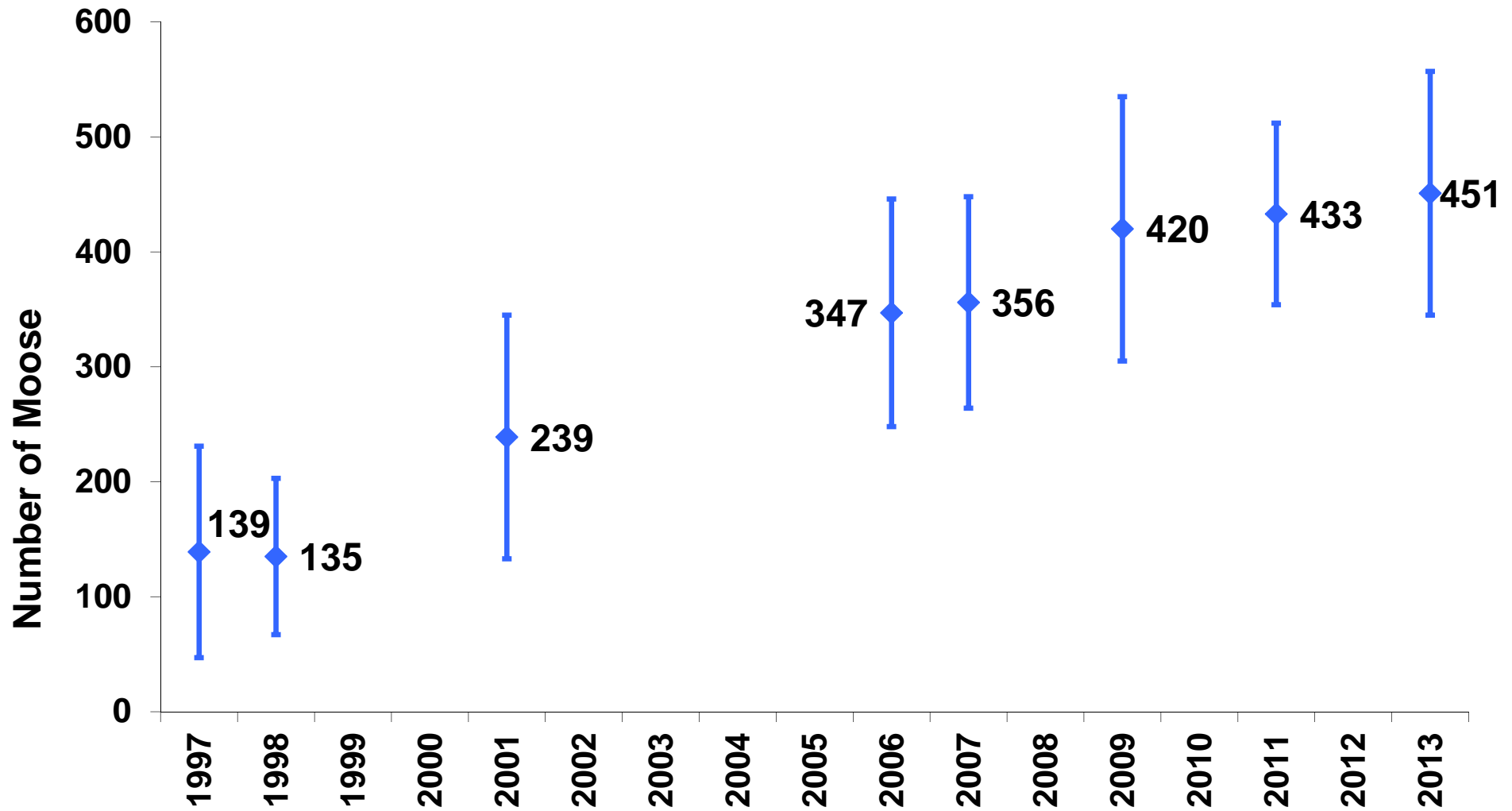
40 Miles

2013 Moose Survey

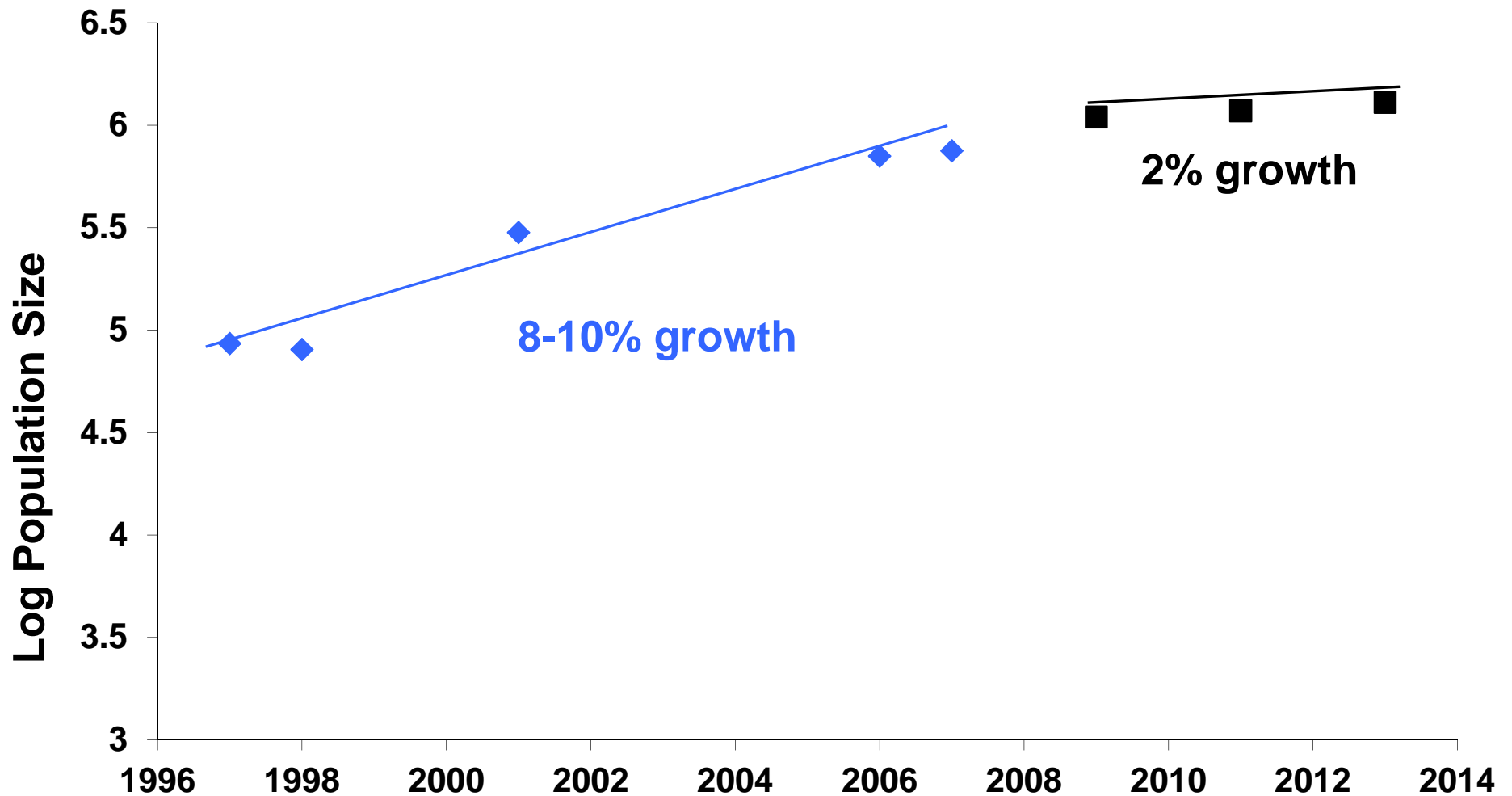
- January 2-February 2
 - No flights from January 6-23
- Surveyed all 29 high-density plots
- Surveyed 14 of 28 low-density plots
- Counted 187 moose
- Estimated 451 moose
 - $\pm 24\%$ CI



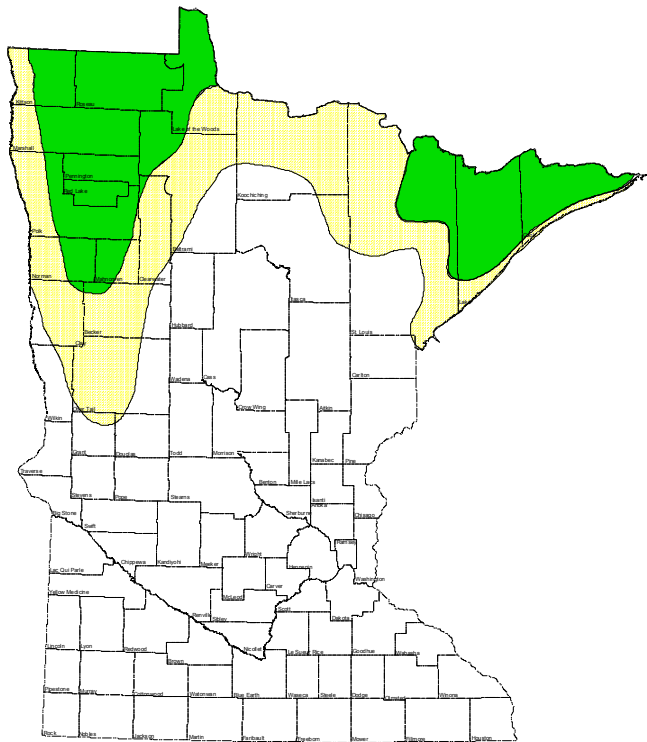
Moose Population Estimates Western UP



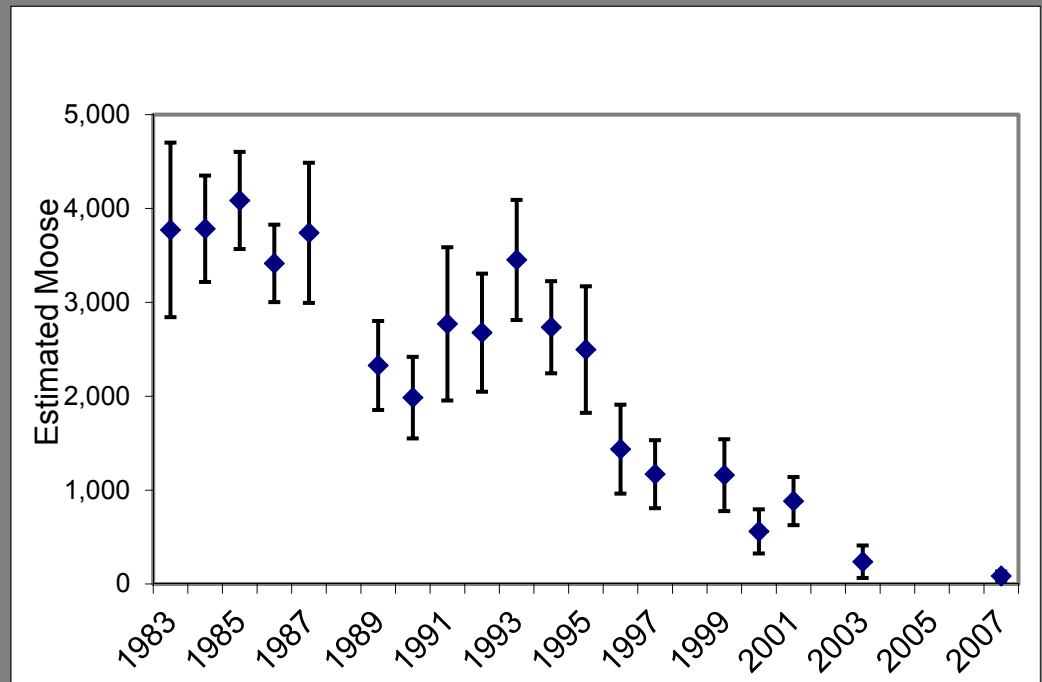
Moose Population Growth Western UP



Moose Declines in Minnesota



Northwestern Minnesota



Moose Hunting?

- Moose Hunting Advisory Council
 - Hunt only when annual growth $\geq 3\%$
- Slow population growth
- Do not recommend a season at this time



Thank You

www.michigan.gov/dnr

